

Message Text

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ACTION EA-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-14 NSCE-00 SP-02 PM-03 INR-05

CIAE-00 NSAE-00 DODE-00 ICA-01 H-01 /033 W

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R 060841Z JUN 78

FM USLO PEKING

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0974

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 1697

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

LIMDIS

NOFORN

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: SEDUC CH

SUBJ: CONTROVERSY OVER EDUCATION REFORM

1. OUR FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING CONTACTS HAVE TOLD US OVER THE PAST FEW DAYS THAT THERE IS STILL CONSIDERABLE, AND QUITE OPEN, CONTROVERSY OVER THE PRC'S RECENT EDUCATION REFORMS. SOME PRC ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS ARE TELLING THEIR FOREIGN COLLEAGUES THAT EDUCATION REFORMS, WHILE JUSTIFIED AND LONG OVERDUE, ARE ELITIST AND ARE GENERATING CONSIDERABLE RESENTMENT AMONG THE "WORKER-PEASANT-SOLCIER" STUDENTS RECRUITED ACCORDING TO CRITERIA ESTABLISHED DURING THE GANG OF FOUR ERA. THE COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMINATIONS, INSTITUTED IN DCEMBER 1977, ARE DESIGNED TO RECRUIT BOTH ACADEMICALLY QUALIFIED AND

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POLITICALLY CORRECT STUDENTS. POLITICAL CRITERIA ARE OFTEN OVERLOOKED IN THE QUEST FOR EXCELLENCE. THE CHINESE TEACHERS MAINTAIN.

2. IN ADDITION, SEVERAL OF THE CHINESE TEACHERS TOLD THE FOREIGNERS THAT SOME DELEGATES TO THE APRIL 22 - MAY 16 NATIONAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE STAGED VERBAL

PROTESTS OVER THE ACADEMIC REFORMS. SEVERAL DISCUSSION SESSIONS AT THE CONFERENCE WERE APPARENTLY DISRUPTED BECAUSE OF ARGUMENTS OVER THE "RESTRICTIVE" AND "ELITIST" EXAMINATION SYSTEM AND THE ABRUPT TURN TOWARD EMPHASIZING "EXPERTISE" OVER "REDNESS". COMPROMISE WAS DIFFICULT BUT TENG HSIAO-PING'S FORCEFUL INTERVENTION TILTED THE BALANCE IN FAVOR OF ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AND EXPANSION OF COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES. WOODCOCK

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: GOVERNMENT REFORM, EDUCATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 jun 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978PEKING01697
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X2
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780236-0065
Format: TEL
From: PEKING
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780691/aaaadapb.tel
Line Count: 71
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: a7066e91-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS, NOFORN
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS, NOFORN
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2475965
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CONTROVERSY OVER EDUCATION REFORM
TAGS: SEDU, PGOV, CH
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/a7066e91-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014